422 case of the main store being depleted. Grown up unmarried sons
543 and also daughters could have each his or her own " mondo." In case of necessity their grain went into the family store, but from it they were allowed to barter grain for the personal ornaments which were common in the tribe. Grain which was still in store when the new crop came in was at the disposal of the woman, who frequently
[437] used it in barter for domestic animals. This custom is called " rundo," and the beast procured, if a cow or heifer is called " dher tekre." It was the woman's own property, subject to the limitations of absolute ownership which pertain to all notions of property among primitive peoples. It could not be bequeathed away from her by her husband. In case of famine she could take of its offspring and barter it for grain. Once having acquired the beast she did not readily part with it, but kept it for her children.

731 As at the present day so also in days gone by, there was no tribal organization of food supplies as a provision against famine. During the last two or three years when crops have been short through damage by locusts there has been one word which was heard very frequently. The word is " kisuma." It means to journey away from the home locality in search of food for the family. In days gone by domestic animals were taken to those who had food to dispose of, and bartered for grain. A man without stock would marry off his girl child, and with the cattle get food. This was the only way in which famine conditions were met. Needless to say when famine was widespread, very much suffering was entailed.

● 242 Rotation of crops is practised to a limited extent. The order of rotation is decided largely, by the period of the year in which the first crop is put down. If virgin or fallow land is prepared for the autumn sowing, then the first crop is one which ripens quickly, such as simsim or beans. When this is harvested, the land will be put under a slower growing crop, like millet or maize. Before being allowed to revert to fallow land, it may be put under sweet potatoes. If the land is first prepared for the spring sowing then the order is reversed. But it must not be taken that what has been written above is the invariable rule. I have known a field to be put down first in sweet potatoes and then followed by a second crop of potatoes before being planted with maize. Also where the land is very rich, as in certain valleys, year after year maize or millet may be put down until the land shows signs of exhaustion. It then reverts to fallow. There is no strict rule governing the length of time it rests. Some allow a rest of three, some of five, years. It depends upon the amount of land available and the pressure of population upon it.

The names used by the Luo for the different phases are as follow:— Virgin soil, " Okapg." Land under rotation, " Tiang." Fallow

242 land, "Mbora." A piece of land weed infested in the middle of cultivation is called "sino," and the Luo are alive to the menace [578] this neglected patch is to the crops surrounding it. A man who allows "sino" to endanger his neighbours' crops is very unpopular.

STATUS OF WOMEN:

562 773 The position of women amongst the Luo is one of great influence, in spite of many things which show that they are not regarded as the equal of the men. While they have nothing in their creation stories which gives the male such pre-eminence as is given in the Hebrew account of creation in the second chapter of Genesis, yet even in their stories it is the male which is created first. The origin of the female is surrounded with mystery, none have any clear account of her origin. But it is significant that the name by which the first woman is known to many of the Luo is ALOO. LOO or LOWO is the stem meaning earth or soil, and there is undoubtedly some connection in their minds between the fruitful soil and woman. But though her origin is surrounded in mystery, she soon is made to carry the responsibility for the act that the sons of men have got to work. Lest the story should be unknown to some it is worth while repeating it here. According to the creation story, the first man to be created was one called Podho. To him the Creator (called Nyasaye) gave a magic hoe, which worked by itself, requiring no arm to wield it. With the hoe Nyasaye gave Podho a command that he was never to attempt to do any work with it himself. If he should disobey this command then the hoe would lose its virtue and cease to work unaided. This happened before the advent of ALOO (sometimes called also MIHAHA). When eventually Podho was given ALOO, he gave the hoe over to her care, telling her at the same time of the command which Nyasaye had laid down. For a time all went well. When they wanted any digging to be done all they had to do was to take the hoe out to the site, show it what they wanted it to dig and leave it to do the work. In the evening it was brought in again. But one day curiosity was too much for ALOO. She felt that she must feel what it was like to turn up a few sods. So she picked up the hoe and with it turned up a little soil. Then becoming suddenly afraid she dropped the hoe and went home, but did not tell her husband, Podho. However she was unable to hide what she had done, for in the evening when they went to bring in the hoe, it lay where she had dropped it, and had done no work. Then the voice of Nyasaye said that as they were now so clever that they knew how to dig, never more would the hoe dig for them. So to this day woman is blamed as the one through whose wrongdoing the curse of work came to men.

562 However the tradition came into existence it reflects the common tendency of many creation stories to put the blame on the woman,